



PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

ATTN: OFFICE OF PUBLICATIONS

Yuichi KATAGISHI et al.

Notice of Allowance Mailed
06/29/2004 - Batch/Confirmation No. 3191
Group Art Unit: 2873

Application No.: 10/688,918

Examiner: R. Mack

Filed: October 21, 2003

Docket No.: 117562

For: LENS BARREL

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Director of the U.S. Patent and
Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the "Reasons for Allowance" included within the Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due, mailed June 29, 2004, in the above-identified application, Applicants respectfully submit the following remarks.

The Reasons for Allowance state that "the prior art fails to teach a combination of all the claimed features as presented in claims 1-17, wherein a lens barrel comprises a main optical system, a blur correction optical system, a lens holding frame, a blur correction drive unit, and a lock mechanism and (claim 3) a biasing device, wherein an optical axis of the blur correction optical system matches the optical axis of the main optical system when the movable engaging portion and the framed engaging portion are in contact with each other, as claimed."

Applicants respectfully note that the recited limitation "wherein an optical axis of the blur correction optical system matches the optical axis of the main optical system when the movable engaging portions and the frame engaging portion are in contact each other" is not present in claim 3.

Further, Applicants believe that claim 3 is patentably distinct with respect to the references cited in the Notice of Allowance. For example, Applicant asserts that the cited prior references do not disclose "a biasing device that applies force to the lens holding frame and the blur correction optical system along a direction intersecting with the optical axis of the main optical system when the movable engaging portion has moved to a position to engage with the frame engaging portion" in combination with other features identified in the Reasons for Allowance.

In a telephone call to Examiner Mack on September 21, 2004, Applicants' representative pointed out to Examiner Mack the above-identified discrepancy in the reasons for allowance. Examiner Mack stated that the extra limitation identified in the reasons for allowance is probably "a mistake on his part, especially if multiple limitations are listed," as is the case in this matter. Examiner Mack stated that in accordance with U.S. PTO practices, Examiners generally do not comment on cases after they have been allowed. However, Examiner Mack suggested that Applicants' representative file these Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance to identify the error in the record.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC:JMH/cfr

Date: September 29, 2004

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